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ABSTRACT

A survey of state legislators was conducted to determine their views of what vocational education should be doing and how it could be improved as well as their perceptions about federal and state roles relative to vocational education. Findings were based on 45 percent of the sample of 209 members of the National Conference of State Legislatures who responded. Legislators saw vocational education as doing an "above average" job; the most frequent grade awarded to both secondary and postsecondary vocational education was "B." Vocational education was seen as performing especially well in teaching job skills, increasing awareness of career opportunities and technology, and teaching good working habits. The areas they thought needed greatest emphasis included involving employers in curriculum development and in evaluation of vocational education. The broader goals of economic development in the community and training for nontraditional occupations were in lesser need of emphasis. Most thought the federal government should be involved in vocational education. Slightly more than one-half thought that, if the federal government were to significantly decrease funds for vocational education, the states should attempt to replace the difference. They believed states should have greater flexibility and should be able to set their own priorities in spending federal vocational education monies. (The survey is appended. Conclusions appear in an executive summary.) (YLB)

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Research and Development Series No. 225B

AS OTHERS SEE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Book 2:

A Survey of the National Conference of State Legislatures

by
Ann R. Nuñez
Jill Frymier Russell

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FOREWORD

Government at all levels in the United States has made a commitment to the provision of public vocational education. Legislators and educators must work together to formulate the most effective policies. This report describes state legislators' views about vocational education. The information within the report is presented to help policymakers at the state and national levels as they consider the governance, funding, and planning of vocational education.

The National Conference of State Legislatures conducted this study with assistance from the National Center for Research in Vocational Education. Sponsorship of this study was provided by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education of the U.S. Department of Education. A sampling of state legislators throughout the country generously shared their opinions about various aspects of vocational education.

Ronald H. Field, Staff Director for Education and Labor, directed the survey activities on behalf of the National Conference of State Legislatures. Joel Gibbs, Graduate Intern, provided information on the survey development and sample selection.

Ann Nuñez, Research Specialist, assisted by Jill Russell, Program Associate, directed the technical assistance effort for the National Center. Leland Rasmussen and Sterling Cox, Graduate Research Associates, also assisted with the tabulation of data. Morgan Lewis, Program Director, and N. L. McCaslin, Division Director, provided advice throughout the project. Typing services were provided by Deborah Anthony, Kathie Medley, and Bernice DeHart. Arthur Lee, with the liaison office of the National Center, and Robert Terhune reviewed the document prior to publication. Final edit was completed by Brenda Sessley of the National Center editorial staff. Their assistance and suggestions for improvement are greatly appreciated.

Robert E. Taylor
Executive Director
The National Center for Research
in Vocational Education

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A survey of state legislators was conducted in the fall of 1981 by the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and technical assistance was provided by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education. The information collected in this mail survey was provided to the National Center for use in the preparation of this report. The purpose of this survey was to determine state legislators' views about vocational education and its outcomes; their views of what vocational education should be doing and how it could be improved; and their perceptions about federal and state roles relative to vocational education.

Two hundred and nine NCSL members were selected for participation in the survey. One hundred and ten persons were members and alternates of the NCSL Education Committee and ninety-nine legislators were randomly selected from NCSL committee members at large to provide geographic representation and equivalent proportions of senators and representatives in the sample. Approximately 45 percent of the sample responded to the survey. Data from a telephone survey of twenty-eight of the nonrespondents revealed no substantial differences between their opinions and those of the mail survey respondents. The opinions and attitudes derived from the respondents do seem to reflect those of the entire population. The analyses of mail survey responses yielded the following findings and conclusions.

Findings

Perceptions about Vocational Education

1. Legislators see vocational education as doing an "above average" job. The most frequent grade awarded to both secondary and postsecondary vocational education by the legislators was "B." However, the percentage of "A"s given postsecondary was twice that given secondary vocational education.
2. The legislators thought that vocational education was performing especially well in teaching job skills, increasing awareness of career opportunities and technology, and teaching good work habits.

What Vocational Education Should Be Doing

3. The areas within vocational education that legislators thought needed the greatest emphasis included involving employers in curriculum development and in the evaluation of vocational education.
4. The broader goals of economic development in the community and training for nontraditional occupations are in lesser need of emphasis, according to the legislators.

Federal and State Roles in Vocational Education

5. Most of the respondents thought that the federal government should be involved in vocational education.
6. Slightly more than one-half of the respondents thought that if the federal government were to significantly decrease funds for vocational education, the states should attempt to replace the difference.
7. The legislators believed states should have greater flexibility and should be able to set their own priorities in spending federal vocational education monies.

Conclusions

The general views of legislators toward vocational education were positive. Vocational education was perceived as performing effectively in areas such as teaching job skills and increasing awareness of career opportunities. The legislators stated, however, that vocational educators should increasingly involve employers in vocational education programming. The state legislators agreed that the federal government should have a continued role in vocational education, but that states should have greater control in determining how federal vocational education funds are spent. Several more specific conclusions are listed as follows:

1. Legislators need more information and knowledge about vocational education. About half of those surveyed were able to identify correctly the governance structure of vocational education within their own state. Awareness of the governance structure may be a critical component for effective policymaking. In a similar vein, legislators need more evaluative data concerning the general effectiveness and outcomes of vocational education. State legislatures have an oversight function and vocational educators have the expertise and access to information to assist state legislators as they carry out this function. Vocational educators perhaps should take the initiative and ask legislators to specify their information needs.
2. Vocational educators need to inform legislators about secondary effects of vocational education. For example, economic development, leadership development, and basic skills acquisition (reading, writing, and arithmetic) are phenomena that vocational educators believe can be affected by vocational education. Legislators, however, did not perceive these effects as outcomes that have been attained to any appreciable extent, nor did they see economic development as one of their highest priorities within vocational education programming.
3. The legislators did not appear to have strong opinions regarding the appropriate emphasis of employability skills versus job skills at the secondary level. Perhaps the most accurate summation of their views is that teaching both employability and job skills should be maintained.
4. Current (1976 Amendments) federal vocational education legislation program emphases and effectiveness indicators (e.g., services to special needs populations, job placement of graduates) are not perceived as top goals by state-level policymakers. This incongruence between federal and state priorities may be problematic in the implementation of vocational education.
5. A state-level advocacy position would emphasize continued federal funding for vocational education but with greater state control over these funds.
6. The state legislators indicated some definite opinions about general use of federal vocational education funds. However, there were less definite views regarding more specific targets for federal vocational education funding (e.g., economic development, training programs in new and developing industries, and combining education and CETA youth programs into one grant).

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a survey assessing the attitudes of state legislators toward vocational education. Legislators gave their opinions about the effectiveness of vocational education and about preferred federal–state roles respective to vocational education. The study was completed through the efforts of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) with this analysis and report provided by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education.

Background

The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) is the official representative of the country's 7,500 state lawmakers. NCSL strives "to improve the quality and effectiveness of state legislatures; to foster interstate communication and cooperation; and to assure state legislatures a strong, cohesive voice in the federal system" (NCSL 1981).

State legislators have an emerging legislative leadership role in education and have been taking the lead both in revising funding formulas and in shaping educational policies (Rosenthal 1981). The attention of state legislators regarding vocational education is further heightened by the expected reauthorization of federal vocational education legislation. The trend toward block grants has also caused increased interest in vocational education (NCSL 1981).

The attention given by states to vocational education parallels that given by the federal government whose involvement with vocational education dates from the 1917 enactment of the Smith–Hughes Act. By 1979 vocational programs enrolled over 17 million people nationally (Golladay and Wulfsberg 1981).

Clearly public vocational education and its governance are important to policymakers at the state and national levels as well as to vocational education planners, administrators, and teachers. This study, therefore, attempts to describe state legislators' perceptions and expectations of vocational education and to outline the legislators' views of federal and state roles respective to vocational education.

An important function of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education is to assemble and provide information about vocational education for national planning and policy development. One way to carry out this function has been to establish cooperative arrangements with organizations that have an interest in vocational education. These arrangements have entailed assisting in the surveying of their members' views of vocational education. This study conducted by NCSL is the result of such an agreement.

Key Topics

Several key topics provided structure to the survey of NSCL members' views of vocational education. The topics emerged from a review of the literature dealing with vocational education effectiveness and policy formulation (Darcy 1980; Farley 1979; Gallup 1981; Lewis, McElwain, and Fornash 1980; Lewis and Russell 1980; Mertens et al. 1980; Nuñez, Puleo, and Mertens 1980; Pound 1981; Ruff, Shylo, and Russell 1981; Ruff 1981). Key topics include: opinions about vocational education; views about what vocational education should be doing and how it could be improved; and perceptions of preferred federal/state roles in vocational education.

The survey form used to gather state legislators' opinions about the key topics is presented in the appendix. Details of the method used by NCSL to select and contact its members are presented in the next chapter.

METHOD

Sample Design

The sample for this survey consisted of 209 state legislators. Included in the sample were all 75 current members of NCSL's education committee and 35 education committee alternate members. The remaining 99 persons were selected at random from NCSL committee members at large.

NCSL committees include legislators from all the states, as appointments to NCSL committees are made by the legislative leadership in each state. Three states, Alaska, Hawaii, and Mississippi, had made no appointment to NCSL's education committee, and Tennessee had only one appointment in October and November 1981 when the first and follow-up survey mailings were sent to the legislators.

The respondents were instructed to base their responses on their home state, and a staff person completing the questionnaire for a legislator was to respond from that legislators' viewpoint. A random sample of approximately 20 percent of the nonrespondents were contacted by telephone and were asked to respond to selected survey items. These responses were not significantly different from those derived from the mail survey.

The Respondents

Ninety-four individuals, or 45 percent of those receiving the survey, completed and returned it to NCSL. Almost all of the respondents reported their title or position as either state senator or representative (table 1). On the average they reported having served 7.6 years in their present position.

More than half the respondents indicated they were members of the education committee in their state. NCSL education committee members most often but not always are on their state's education committee.

TABLE 1

Title of Person Completing the Survey by Percentage
(N = 94)

Position or Title	*Percentage*
State Senator	45
State Representative	46
Assemblyperson	3
Delegate	1
Staff	4
Missing	1

Table 2 gives the respondents' self-disclosed state committee membership and position across three committees. These committees were included because they would most likely deal with issues important to vocational education. The average number of years the respondents reported having served on these committees was 6.5 years on the education committee, 4.7 years on the employment and training or labor committee, and 5.6 years on an economic development committee.

TABLE 2

Committee Membership and Position by Percentage

	Percentage
Education Committee	
Membership (N = 94)	
Yes	61
No	38
Missing	1
Position (N = 57)	
Chairperson	40
Vice-Chairperson	11
Ranking Member	25
Member	25
Employment & Training or Labor Committee	
Membership (N = 94)	
Yes	22
No	77
Missing	1
Position (N = 21)	
Chairperson	14
Vice-Chairperson	14
Ranking Member	9
Member	62
Economic Development Committee	
Membership (N = 94)	
Yes	27
No	68
Missing	5
Position (N = 30)	
Chairperson	20
Vice-Chairperson	3
Ranking Member	7
Member	47
Missing	23

Description of the Sample

Respondents were asked to give their state, their house membership, and a demographic description of their district (table 3). The highest single percentage of respondents were from the southern states, were in the majority party in their house, and represented an area including a small city or town with less than 50,000 persons.

TABLE 3

Description of State Legislators by Percentage

	Respondents by Percentage (N = 94)	*Original Sample by Percentage (N = 209)*
Regional Representation:		
Northeast	13	19
South	31	34
North Central	29	24
West	27	23
Missing	1	0
House Membership:		
Majority	77	
Minority	21	(Not
Missing	2	available)
District Description:		
In open country or farm area with no town larger than 10,000	13	
In an area including a small city or town with less than 50,000 persons	44	
In an area including a medium-sized city, over 50,000 and less than a half million persons	26	(Not available)
In a suburban area, near a large city with over a half million persons	11	
In a large city over a half million persons	6	
Missing	1	

SOURCE: The regional division of the United States was obtained from the *County and City Data Book, 1977* (U.S. Department of Commerce 1978). As noted by Rosenthal (1981), most legislators are Democrats; therefore, house membership with the majority most often connotes an according party affiliation.

Two items were included in the survey to provide some indication of the respondent's familiarity with vocational education (Gentry 1977). The first of these items asked the respondents to indicate the vocational education governance structure in their state. Although differences among governance structures are not readily distinguishable, e.g., vocational education governance may be included with elementary and secondary schools or may be separate, almost 50 percent of the respondents were able to correctly identify the structure within their state. As shown in table 4, both members and nonmembers of education committees were about equally divided in their ability to correctly identify the governance structure in their state.

TABLE 4

Knowledge of State Vocational Education Governance Structure by Education Committee Membership

Education Committee	*Responses by Percentage: Correct*	*Incorrect*	*Missing*
Members (N = 57)	49	51	0
Nonmembers (N = 36)	44	53	3

A second item asked about respondent's involvement with vocational education legislation. Nearly 20 percent have often sponsored vocational education legislation. Slightly more than 20 percent reported that their priorities do not allow them to follow vocational education legislation closely (table 5).

TABLE 5

Involvement with Vocational Education Legislation by Percentage
(N = 94)

Involvement	*Never*	*Sometimes*	*Often*	*Missing*
I have sponsored vocational education legislation	35	45	19	1
I follow closely vocational education legislation in my state	3	27	70	0
I have contact with state and local vocational education administrators and/or other vocational groups	5	36	56	2
I have other priorities that keep me from following vocational education legislation very closely	22	37	26	15

Analysis of Data

Analysis of the data was completed by examining the frequency of responses to each survey question. Cross-tabulations of responses were also completed for selected items. The findings from the analysis and a discussion of results are presented in the results and discussion section that follows.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The major findings from this study are highlighted by organizing information around key topics. The topics concern respondents' perceptions about vocational education, including their views about the outcomes of vocational education, their views about what vocational education should be doing and how it can be improved, and their opinions concerning federal and state roles in directing vocational education.

Perceptions about Vocational Education

Respondents were asked to grade (on a scale of A, B, C, D, Fail) both high school and post-secondary level vocational education in their state. Although "B" was most often awarded for both levels, the percentage of "A"s given postsecondary was twice that given secondary education (figure 1). The more frequent offerings of higher level technical and skill training programs at the postsecondary level may to some degree account for these views. Also, a comparison of these survey results with those of the Gallup poll of public opinion about public schools (1981) demonstrates a relatively more positive view afforded by legislators toward public vocational education than by the general public toward public schools.

The legislators were also requested to indicate to what extent they felt that twelve vocational education outcomes are attained in their state. Table 6 presents respondents' ratings of the extent to which these twelve outcomes were achieved.

The outcomes that legislators felt were most evident in the list of twelve included teaching job skills, increasing awareness of career opportunities, increasing awareness of technology used by business and industry, and teaching good work habits. The outcomes legislators felt were least evident in the list of twelve were improving basic skills (reading, writing, and arithmetic), developing leadership qualities, and reducing unemployment of minorities.

Scores of four, three, two, and one were assigned to the categories labeled "great extent," "moderate extent," "small extent," and "not at all" (table 6). These scores then corresponded to the legislators' responses about the attainment of the individual outcomes listed. An overall score for the attainment of these outcomes was computed by adding the individual scores. There was an inverse relationship between grades awarded secondary vocational education and the overall score computed across all possible outcomes. This relationship was contrary to that expected. However, there is some reservation about combining the variety of outcomes into a single unit represented by a composite score.

Another relationship was noted between grades awarded secondary vocational education and house membership. The minority party members graded secondary vocational education less favorably, giving proportionately more Cs. The majority party members awarded comparatively more Bs.

FIGURE 1
GRADING OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION BY PERCENTAGE

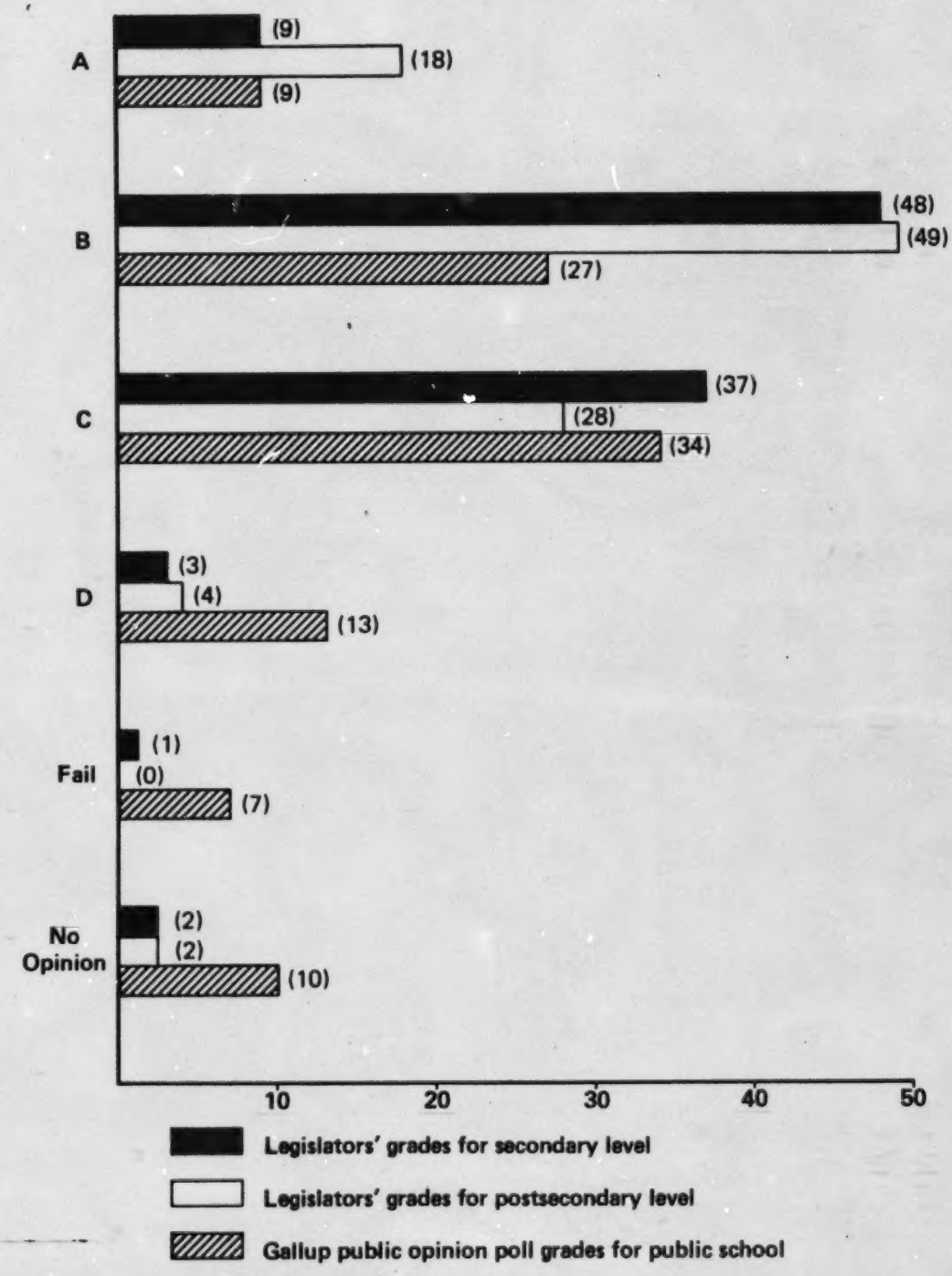

TABLE 6

Legislators' Perceptions of the Degree to Which Possible Vocational Education Outcomes are Attained by Percentage (N = 94)

Possible Outcome	*Great Extent*	*Moderate Extent*	*Small Extent*	*Not at all*	*Missing*
Teaches job skills	39	50	10	0	1
Increases awareness of career opportunities	34	53	9	2	2
Increases awareness of technology used by business and industry	29	56	12	1	2
Teaches good work habits	21	56	16	2	4
Reduces unemployment	18	60	19	1	2
Provides for retraining for adult workers	17	48	32	0	3
Improves training opportunities for handicapped	16	54	24	2	3
Decreases the dropout rate	14	54	29	1	2
Encourages economic development	13	49	31	5	2
Reduces unemployment of minorities	12	36	40	6	5
Improves basic skills (reading, writing, arithmetic)	9	37	47	3	4
Develops leadership qualities	6	45	41	4	3

Overall the legislators appear to believe vocational education is doing a good job, slightly favoring the postsecondary level. Vocational education outcomes that the legislators think are more evident are in the areas of teaching about jobs and other aspects of work such as required work habits, career opportunities, and technology utilization.

What Vocational Education Should Be Doing

The legislators were asked for their recommendations about future efforts in fourteen different areas that might be addressed by vocational education programming. As shown in table 7, the areas receiving the most support for increased efforts among the list of fourteen included involving employers in the evaluation of vocational education programs and involving employers in the development of vocational education curriculum. The legislators supported to a lesser degree teaching about fundamental technologies and providing work experience at the secondary level. Additional recommendations were directed toward providing training programs in high technology occupations,

developing students' basic skills (reading, writing, arithmetic) and providing funding to keep vocational programs current with changing technology. The areas receiving the least support for increased efforts among the list of fourteen were training in nontraditional occupations, using public vocational education funds for training/retraining of employees at the job site, and supporting economic development in the community. These results should not be interpreted as meaning

TABLE 7

Legislators' Recommendations for Vocational Education Programming by Percentage
(N = 94)

Programming Areas	*Increase Effort*	*Maintain Current Effort*	*Decrease Effort*	*No Opinion*	*Missing*
Involving employers in the evaluation of vocational education programs	69	24	0	3	3
Involving employers in the development of vocational education curriculum	67	28	0	3	2
Teaching secondary level students about fundamental technologies used by business and industry	61	32	0	4	3
Providing work experience as part of secondary vocational education students' training	61	32	1	4	2
Providing training programs in high technology occupations	61	25	1	10	3
Developing students' basic skills (reading, writing, arithmetic)	60	32	1	4	2
Providing funds to keep vocational education programs current with changing technology	59	32	1	4	4
Teaching at the secondary level how to get and hold a job	57	34	0	6	2
Teaching technical and manual job skills at the secondary level	55	38	1	3	2
Teaching technical and manual job skills at the postsecondary level	53	37	2	5	2
Assisting vocational education students to find jobs	52	40	0	5	2
Supporting economic development in the community	46	41	2	7	3
Using public vocational education funds for training/retraining of employees at the job sites	41	39	4	12	3
Training females in male occupations, and vice versa	34	45	5	13	2

the respondents do not endorse these activities. These ratings simply mean that some areas have higher priority than others for increased effort.

Few legislators advocated decreased effort in any area; most recommended increased effort or maintenance of current effort. A direct positive relationship was noted between education committee membership and legislators' recommendations for increased efforts to support economic development in the community.

These findings suggest that legislators thought employers should be more involved in the planning and evaluation of vocational education and that perhaps more of the "employability" aspects of vocational education should be emphasized. Fewer legislators thought that the broader goals of economic development and training in nontraditional occupations need greater emphasis within vocational education programming.

Federal and State Roles in Vocational Education

The issue of appropriate federal and state roles in regard to vocational education has been of increasing interest to legislators in recent years. The survey explored various aspects of financing and goal setting for vocational education and the relationship between federal and state authority.

A first, general question dealt with opinions about possible decreases in federal funds for vocational education. Specifically, the legislators were asked whether states should increase their funding sufficiently to replace any federal cut. More than half the respondents favored such action and nearly one-fifth disagreed. Almost one-quarter of the respondents were uncertain of their views on this issue (figure 2). The uncertains tended to be chairpersons or vice-chairpersons on the education committee. Persons responding affirmatively to this question tended to view secondary vocational education more favorably than those who disagreed or who were uncertain.

The next question concerned the legitimacy of the federal government's role in public vocational education and showed more than 75 percent affirmation of a legitimate federal role (figure 3). Those opposed on this issue, about 10 percent, were instructed to skip the remaining questions.

The remaining questions requested the legislators to indicate their views on how the federal and state governments might interact in establishing policy for vocational education. Those questions eliciting the greatest agreement included allowing states more flexibility in the ways they may use federal vocational education funds, allowing the states to set their own priorities for spending federal vocational education funds, and having federal reporting requirements apply only to federally-funded programs (table 8). In addition, the legislators disagreed substantially (69 percent) to having the federal government set the overall goals for vocational education at all levels. Least agreement was with the targeting of federal vocational education funds solely on special needs groups and with using these funds only for improving or expanding rather than maintaining vocational education programs.

To summarize this group of responses, most state legislators thought the federal government should participate in the funding of vocational education. Most legislators said that states (or locals) should have greater say over priorities and spending. They also suggested that federal vocational education funds should be used for maintaining programs. There was a division of opinion about targeting federal vocational education funds on economic development or developing specific occupational training in new and emerging industries. Opinions about combining funding for vocational education and CETA youth programs were also divided.

FIGURE 2
STATES SHOULD INCREASE FUNDING TO REPLACE A FEDERAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FUND DECREASE BY PERCENTAGE

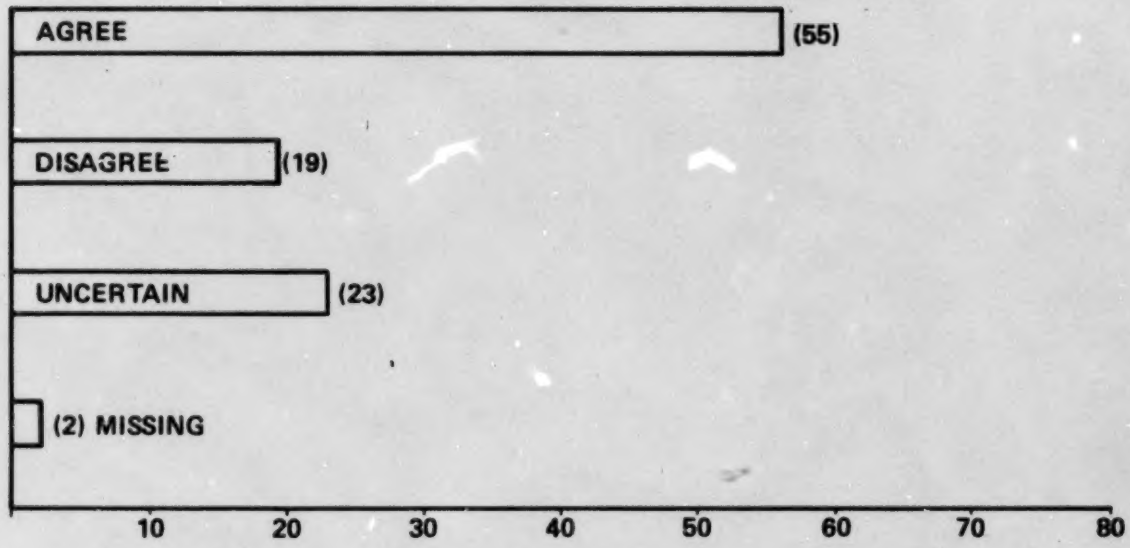

FIGURE 3
THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS A LEGITIMATE ROLE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION BY PERCENTAGE

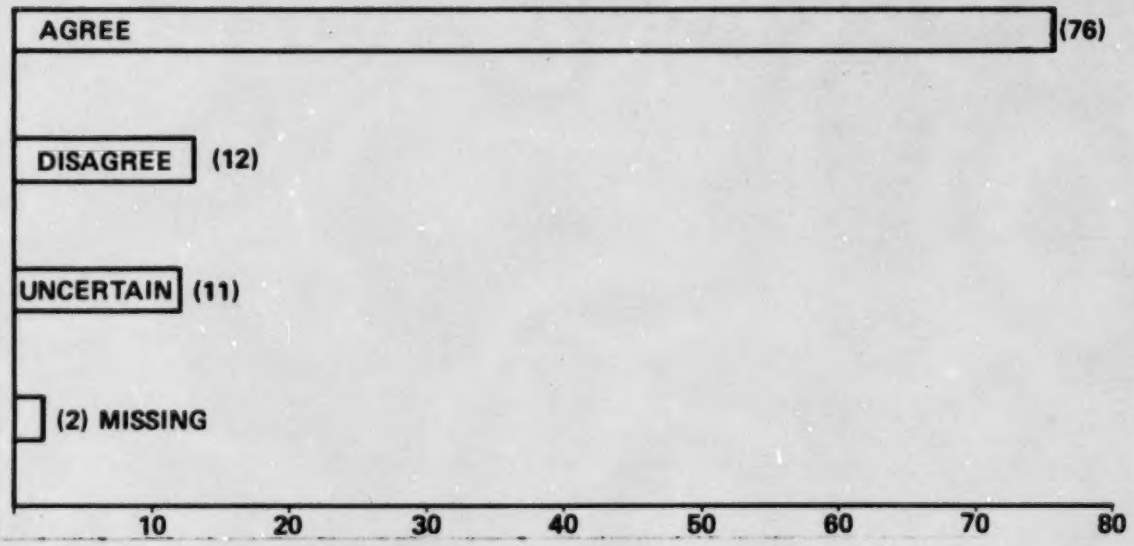

TABLE 8

Views on the Federal Government's Role in Vocational Education by Percentage (N = 83)

Federal Role	*Agree*	*Disagree*	*Uncertain*	*Missing*
The federal government should allow states more flexibility in the ways they may use federal vocational education funds	75	2	6	17
The federal government should allow states to set their own priorities for spending federal vocational education funds	71	5	8	16
Federal reporting requirements should apply only to federally funded programs	58	17	8	17
The federal government should set the overall goals for vocational education at all levels	7	69	8	16
The federal government should require comprehensive vocational education planning (e.g., program coordination between student needs and available jobs)	42	30	10	18
Federal funding for vocational education and CETA youth programs should be combined into one grant	28	33	23	17
Federal vocational education funds should be targeted at developing specific occupational training in new and developing industries	23	37	22	18
Federal vocational education funds should be targeted on economic development	22	37	24	17
Federal vocational education funds should be used only for improving or expanding vocational education programs, not for maintaining programs	7	64	12	17
Federal vocational education funds should be targeted solely on special needs groups (handicapped, disadvantaged)	2	72	10	16

Summary

This study has described some aspects of state legislators' views of vocational education. The information will be used to assist policymakers and administrators in their planning as well as to help them outline future directions for and relationships with vocational education.

APPENDIX

Survey Form

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES
SURVEY OF LEGISLATORS' OPINIONS ABOUT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please help us by completing this survey form about public vocational education, which should take about 15 minutes of your time. Legislators should base their responses on their home state. A staff person completing the questionnaire for a legislator should respond from that legislator's viewpoint. Your responses do not commit you to any future activities. Return the form in the enclosed envelope to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) as soon as possible. The identity of respondents will be strictly confidential.

We appreciate your assistance.

A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Referring to the person completing the survey form:

1. Your name: _____

2. Your present title or position: (check one)

   (1) ☐ *State Senator*
   (2) ☐ *State Representative*
   (3) ☐ *Assemblyperson*
   (4) ☐ *Delegate*
   (5) ☐ *Staff*

   If staff, please indicate job title: _____

   Please indicate legislative body: _____

Referring to the legislator to whom the survey form was addressed:

3. State: _____

4. Your membership in your house is with: (check one)

   (1) ☐ *the majority*
   (2) ☐ *the minority*

5. How many years have you served in your present position? _____

6. Check the category below which best describes your district:

   (1) ☐ *In open country or farm area with no town larger than 10,000.*
   (2) ☐ *In an area including a small city or town with less than 50,000 persons.*
   (3) ☐ *In an area including a medium sized city, over 50,000 and less than a half million persons.*
   (4) ☐ *In a suburban area, near a large city with over a half million persons.*
   (5) ☐ *In a large city over a half million persons.*

7. Are you on the education committee in your state?

   (1) ☐ *Yes. How many years?* _____
   (2) ☐ *No. If no, go to question 9.*

8. What is your current position on the education committee?

   (1) ☐ *Chairperson*
   (2) ☐ *Vice-Chairperson*
   (3) ☐ *Ranking Member*
   (4) ☐ *Member*

9. Are you on a committee that deals with employment and training or labor?

   (1) ☐ *Yes. How many years?* _____
   (2) ☐ *No. If no, go to question 11.*

10. What is your current position on this employment and training or labor committee?

    (1) ☐ *Chairperson*
    (2) ☐ *Vice-Chairperson*
    (3) ☐ *Ranking Member*
    (4) ☐ *Member*

11. Are you on a committee that deals with economic development (e.g., urban or rural development, or business concerns)?

(1) ☐ *Yes. How many years?* _____

Name of committee _____

(2) ☐ *No. If no, go to question 13.*

12. What is your current position on this economic development committee?

(1) ☐ *Chairperson*
(2) ☐ *Vice-Chairperson*
(3) ☐ *Ranking Member*
(4) ☐ *Member*

13. What three industries contribute most to the economy of your state (e.g., manufacturing, tourism, agriculture, etc.)?

_____ / _____ / _____

14. What are the major developing industries in your state (e.g., tourism, high technology, mining, etc.)?

_____ / _____ / _____

15. What is the vocational education governance structure in your state?

(1) ☐ *One agency for all levels of education.*

(2) ☐ *An agency for elementary and secondary schools, including vocational education; and a state coordinating or governing agency for higher education.*

(3) ☐ *An agency for elementary and secondary schools; an agency for vocational education; and a state coordinating or governing agency for higher education.*

(4) ☐ *An agency for elementary and secondary schools, including vocational education; and governing boards for individual institutions of higher education with no statewide governing agency.*

(5) ☐ *Other. Specify:* _____

(6) ☐ *Uncertain.*

16. Considering vocational education legislation: (check one response per question)

	Never	*Sometimes*	*Often*
(1) *I have sponsored vocational education legislation.*	☐	☐	☐
(2) *I follow closely vocational education legislation in my state.*	☐	☐	☐
(3) *I have contact with state and local vocational education administrators and/or other vocational groups.*	☐	☐	☐
(4) *I have other priorities which keep me from following vocational edu- education legislation very closely.*	☐	☐	☐

B. HOW WELL IS VOCATIONAL EDUCATION WORKING IN YOUR STATE?

17. Vocational education may produce many positive outcomes. Indicate to what extent vocational education in your state produces the listed outcomes.

		Great Extent	*Moderate Extent*	*Small Extent*	*Not at all*
(1)	*Reduces unemployment*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(2)	*Reduces unemployment of minorities*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(3)	*Improves training opportunities for handicapped*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(4)	*Improves basic skills (reading, writing, arithmetic)*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(5)	*Teaches good work habits*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(6)	*Increases awareness of career opportunities*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(7)	*Increases awareness of technology used by business and industry*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(8)	*Provides for retraining for adult workers*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(9)	*Teaches job skills*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(10)	*Encourages economic development*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(11)	*Develops leadership qualities*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(12)	*Decreases the dropout rate*	☐	☐	☐	☐

(13) *Other. Specify:* _____

18. Students often are given the grades A, B, C, D, and F (Fail) to denote the quality of their work. Suppose secondary vocational education in your state were graded in the same way. What grade would you give *secondary* vocational education? (check one)

(1) ☐ *A*
(2) ☐ *B*
(3) ☐ *C*
(4) ☐ *D*
(5) ☐ *F (Fail)*
(6) ☐ *No opinion*

19. What grade would you award *post-secondary* vocational education in your state? (check one)

(1) ☐ *A*
(2) ☐ *B*
(3) ☐ *C*
(4) ☐ *D*
(5) ☐ *F (Fail)*
(6) ☐ *No opinion*

C. HOW CAN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION BE IMPROVED?

20. Efforts could be increased in different areas within vocational education. What would you recommend? (Check one response per question.)

		Increase Effort	*Maintain Current Effort*	*Decrease Effort*	*No Opinion*
(1)	*Teaching at the* secondary *level how to get and hold a job*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(2)	*Teaching technical and manual job skills at* secondary *level.*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(3)	*Teaching technical and manual job skills at the* post-secondary *level.*	☐	☐	☐	☐
* (4)	*Training/retraining for adults.*				
(5)	*Training females in male occupations, and vice-versa.*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(6)	*Assisting vocational education students to find jobs.*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(7)	*Using public vocational education funds for training/retraining of employees at the job sites.*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(8)	*Involving employers in the development of vocational education curriculum.*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(9)	*Involving employers in the evaluation of vocational education programs.*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(10)	*Developing students' basic skills (reading, writing, arithmetic).*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(11)	*Providing work experience as a part of secondary vocational education students' training.*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(12)	*Teaching* secondary *level students about fundamental technologies used by business and industry.*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(13)	*Providing funds to keep vocational education programs current with changing technology.*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(14)	*Supporting economic development in the community.*	☐	☐	☐	☐
(15)	*Providing training programs in high technology occupations.*	☐	☐	☐	☐

* This item was excluded from the data analysis because a printing error on the survey form resulted in a large proportion of non response.

D. FEDERAL ROLE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

21. For each of the following statements about the federal role in vocational education, indicate whether you agree, disagree, or are undecided.

		Agree	*Disagree*	*Uncertain*
(1)	*If federal funds for vocational education end or decrease drastically, states should increase their funding sufficiently to replace the federal cut.*	☐	☐	☐
(2)	*The federal government has no legitimate role in vocational education.*	☐	☐	☐

If you agreed with number (2) above, you may skip the remaining questions.

(3)	*The federal government should allow states more flexibility in the ways they may use federal vocational education funds.*	☐	☐	☐
(4)	*Federal vocational education funds should be targeted on economic development.*	☐	☐	☐
(5)	*The federal government should allow states to set their own priorities for spending federal vocational education funds.*	☐	☐	☐
(6)	*Federal vocational education funds should be targeted solely on special need groups (handicapped, disadvantaged).*	☐	☐	☐
(7)	*The federal government should set the overall goals for vocational education at all levels.*	☐	☐	☐
(8)	*Federal vocational education funds should be used only for improving or expanding vocational education programs, not for maintaining programs.*	☐	☐	☐
(9)	*Federal reporting requirements should apply only to federally funded programs.*	☐	☐	☐
(10)	*The federal government should require comprehensive vocational education planning (e.g., program coordination between student needs and available jobs).*	☐	☐	☐
(11)	*Federal vocational education funds should be targeted at developing specific occupational training in new and developing industries.*	☐	☐	☐
(12)	*Federal funding for vocational education and CETA youth programs should be combined into one grant.*	☐	☐	☐

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Please return this survey to the National Conference of State Legislatures in the envelope provided.

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